



VISTA TRANSIT FIVE YEAR MASTER PLAN

FINAL REPORT

AUGUST 2008



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Cover: Vista Transit Center

CHAPTER ONE INTRODUCTION

Vista Transit has been providing transit service to the City of Sierra Vista and Fort Huachuca in southeastern Arizona since 1994. In 2001, management of the service was transferred from Catholic Community Services to the City of Sierra Vista. Originally, service was demand responsive based on passenger requests. Current service is provided by four fixed routes that meet at a newly completed Transit Center. Deviation from the route is available to provide curbside pick-up services for riders over the age of 65, developmentally disabled, or physically impaired. In 2004, the Vista Public Transit System Master Plan Update was completed. This plan addressed the areas of management, operations, marketing, and funding to improve efficiency and expand transit services. In addition to the completion of the Transit Center, significant improvements to the route structure have been accomplished over the past three years. The Vista Transit Five-Year Plan, 2008 to 2013, will address the community goals for transit and strategies to accomplish improvements and innovations over the next five years.

The Public Transportation Section of the Multimodal Planning Division of the Arizona Department of Transportation (ADOT) administers transit programs including the Federal Transportation Administration (FTA) Section 5311 Rural Transit Program. The Section 5311 grant program provides significant funding to support operations, administration, and capital acquisition for rural transit programs statewide including Vista Transit. In recent years, rural transit agencies have been impacted by several major events:

- SAFETEA-LU Reauthorization increased federal funding 46% through Federal Fiscal Year 2009. At the same time, state funding, in Arizona available under the LTAF-II program and a primary source of local match funds, has fluctuated annually.
- Triggered by statewide growth and increasing awareness of the importance of transportation alternatives, the number of rural public transit agencies has increased from fifteen in 2004 to seventeen in 2007. Additional rural communities are poised to implement service over the next several years.
- Requirements for coordination under the United We Ride program raised the bar on the need to use transportation resources effectively. *Arizona Rides* has addressed efforts to coordinate with human service transportation on a local, regional, and statewide level.
- Regional opportunities to provide rural and urban connectivity, particularly for workers, has become an important priority

With this dynamic environment, the Public Transportation Section (PTS) is committed to provide recipients of funding from the Section 5311 with updated and meaningful plans that will support current and future needs of their local communities. For statewide management, it will be important to establish a consistent timeframe and format. To achieve this, the planning duration of the master plan has been extended to five years and updated plans will be provided to all agencies by November 2008.

These plans will include specific accountability elements and consistent formatting, enabling analysis of accomplishment of goals and comparison of performance indicators to better assist local agencies and help to direct the allocation of limited resources. These plans will also make effective use of the information developed in the Arizona Rides Regional Transportation Coordination Plans (RAE Consultants, Inc.) and the Rural Transit Needs Assessment Study (Cambridge Systematics).

These plans will include:

- Community Goals For Transit: The local environment, both of community stakeholders and staff, will provide the basis for developing plan goals and objectives.
- Community Profile: In addition to general socioeconomic data, particular attention will be paid to transit dependent populations.
- Transit Demand Estimate: Consistent data and methodology will be used to estimate transit needs of the community.
- Transit Service Inventory: Current transit services being provided by Vista Transit, including operation, equipment and facilities, and administration, will be profiled. Current service levels will be reviewed for both cost and service effectiveness and efficiency. Information about other transit services being provided in the community will be identified.
- Coordination Strategy: Efforts to coordinate with other transit services, including human service agencies, will be reviewed and effective strategies developed.
- Service Analysis/Alternatives: Alternatives to accomplish community goals will be developed and discussed. Recommendations for service and administrative improvement will be discussed by stakeholders.
- Five Year Implementation Plan: A detailed listing of activities to accomplish plan goals will be provided. Included will be staff/local responsibilities and completion dates.

The five-year implementation plan will provide a roadmap for the future of Vista Transit. In addition, a matrix of tasks and responsibilities will provide ADOT-PTS with a framework to maintain management oversight of the rural transportation programs. These plans will become a key part of the evaluation process for future funding cycles. Areas that will be important in the review of grant applications will include:

- sustainability of service,
- expectations for improved/expanded service,
- efforts to adapt service to changing local needs, and
- return on investment of the grant funds.

CHAPTER TWO COMMUNITY GOALS FOR TRANSIT

An important step in updating this plan is assuring the plan is meaningful and addresses the current and future needs of Sierra Vista communities. In addition to current riders and major activity centers served by Vista Transit today, the needs of underserved, growing and future markets must be identified.

In an effort to develop this information, a survey was distributed to the community in November 2007 using Zoomerang ® Survey technology. A total of 62 responses were received. Detailed information and comments from the survey are available in Appendix A. While this is not a definitive reflection of community input, it establishes a backdrop for this planning effort.

Summary comments include:

- 65% of those completing the survey are currently using the service; 35% are not riders.
- 77% rate the level of service as excellent or good, 23% rate service as average to poor.
- Ridership by route shows:

Central	28%
North/South Loop	21%
East Side Loop	15%
West Side Loop	13%
Curbside Pick-Up	10%
Fort Huachuca	7%
Special Events	3%

Ridership on the Central bus, the route serving the major shopping/restaurant district is the highest. The next three loops, North/South, East and West account for just fewer than 50% of the remaining riders. These are the neighborhood circulator routes that connect from the residential areas into the activity centers. Ridership from Fort Huachuca is anticipated to show a significant increase with the recent reconfiguration of service focusing on riders after classroom hours and on weekends.

A workshop to identify the community perception of current services and discuss the issues that need to be addressed over the next five years to improve service by Vista Transit was held in mid-December 2007. Fifteen persons attended and, following a review of the community survey results, focused on identifying and prioritizing the issues to incorporate in the Five Year Plan. The Agenda for this meeting as well as minutes of the discussion are available in Appendix B.

Four specific issues were identified through the information provided in the survey and at the Community Workshop.

- New Service Areas:
 - Vista View Resort, located east of Sierra Vista, has requested service. The Resort is outside of the current service area, the city limits of Sierra Vista. However, curb-to-curb service is provided to the adjacent mobile home park which is in the city limits. A grant application from the New Freedom Section 5317 program to fund this service has been submitted by SEAGO, with a commitment by the Cochise Board of Supervisors to provide the local match. A decision how to best provide this service, through an Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA), Vista Transit or another local service provider (operating with Section 5310-Elderly/Disabled funding), will need to be addressed.
 - Alternatives for service to the area south of the Mall such as Pueblo del Sol, “The Ridges”, and Canyon de Flores need to be addressed as this area grows. The population includes a number of age 55 plus housing developments.
- Information/Alternatives to Address Expanded Service Areas:
 - The discussion about Vista View Resort identified the need to address the overall issue of serving enclaves and/or adjacent unincorporated county residents.
 - The plan needs to identify the facts of providing service, including potential riders in these areas and cost to provide service.
 - The plan also needs to identify alternatives to provide this service and potential funding resources.
- Alternatives to Address Regional Coordination/Funding
 - In order to support the coordination of services and address requests for expanded service, information about alternatives to form regional alliances need to be identified.
 - Regional options will be a longer term decision. However, this plan will begin to develop the needed information.
- Administrative/Management Development of Vista Transit
 - As Vista Transit service has expanded, it is necessary to review job descriptions, specifically to recognize need for advanced computer skills.
 - Adaptation of and new technology to make dispatch more efficient.

In addition to these comments, discussion with Vista Transit staff and other regional transit providers identified the importance of clarifying a program to address other issues including:

- When the population of Sierra Vista reaches 50,000, the area will be considered a small urbanized area and will need to apply for funding from an alternative program, FTA Section 5307.
- Continuing need to coordinate/support Fort Huachuca. There is an on-going need to revise this service frequently to accommodate fluctuating populations and growth changes on the Fort.
- Fare structure needs to be reviewed and adjusted if appropriate.

- Americans with Disabilities Act requirements need to be carefully addressed in any plan.
- Marketing opportunities need to be identified.

Over the past several years, Vista Transit has completed several significant improvements including revision of route structure to shorten ride time and completion of the Transit Center. This facility supports all routes, allows for real-time transfers throughout the system and is a community focal point for transportation coordination. Community stakeholders and City of Sierra Vista staff are committed to continuing these improvements.

CHAPTER THREE COMMUNITY PROFILE

Sierra Vista is a growing community located seventy miles southeast of Tucson. This dynamic city reflects multiple roles – a major regional shopping and commercial center, home to Fort Huachuca (headquarters to the U.S. Army Intelligence Center and School), and most recently a popular location for retirees. A map of the study area is available in Figure III-1.

The city of Sierra Vista is surrounded on all sides by the Huachuca, Dragoon, Whetstone and Mule Mountains with the San Pedro River at the center of the valley. At an elevation of 4,600 feet, Sierra Vista has spectacular weather in addition to views. Year round temperatures range from an average maximum of 75 to a minimum of 50 degrees.

Sierra Vista encompasses more than 130 miles (including Fort Huachuca) and is the largest of the seven incorporated cities in Cochise County and is the 15th largest sub-county area of 88 areas statewide. Over one-third of Cochise County's population resides in Sierra Vista and has been identified as serving a commercial market of 170,000 people in southeastern Arizona and northern Sonora, Mexico.

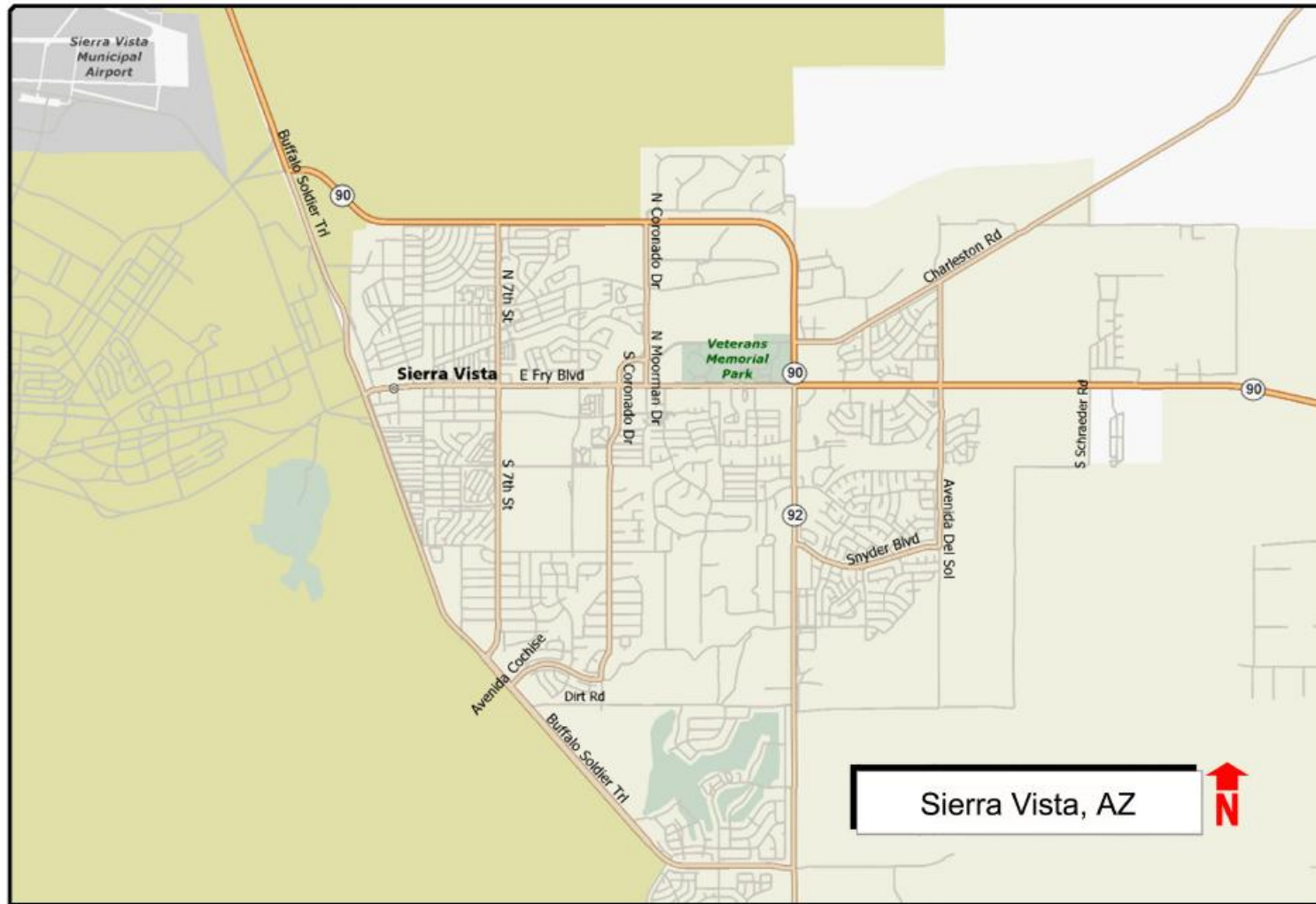
Population has grown significantly since Census 2000. Based on estimates by the Arizona Department of Economic Security and Cochise College Center for Economic Research, population grew 14.5% between 1990 and 2000, and 18.4% from 2000 to 2007.

Table III-1
Sierra Vista Population Growth

Year	Population	% Change
1990	32,983	
2000	37,775	14.5%
2001	38,740	2.6%
2002	40,415	4.3%
2003	40,410	0.0%
2004	42,725	5.7%
2005	43,690	2.3%
2006	44,870	2.7%
2007	44,736	-0.3%

Source: Arizona Department of Economic Security and Cochise College Center for Economic Research, City of Sierra Vista Website.

FIGURE III-1
Sierra Vista Study Area



In developing a transit plan, the identification of populations that tend to use transit services more than the general public is important. These transit dependent population groups were identified in the Rural Transit Needs Assessment Study. Using the Arkansas Public Transportation Needs Assessment (APTNA) method, populations of elderly persons ages 60 and over, persons with disabilities under the age of 60, and persons living in poverty under age 60 were projected for 2007 and 2016. Based on July 1, 2007 population estimates provided by the Population Statistics Unit, Research Administration of the Department of Economic Security, the population for all of Cochise County was 137,200. Sierra Vista population was 44,736 or 32.6% of the total county population.

Table III-2
Estimated Transit Dependent Populations

Population Group:	2007	2016
<i>All Cochise County:</i>		
Elderly persons ages 60 and over	31,978	49,648
Disabled persons under the age of 60	12,170	15,755
Persons living in poverty under age 60	19,629	25,410
<i>Sierra Vista: Based on 32.6% of Cochise County</i>		
Elderly persons ages 60 and over	10,427	
Disabled persons under the age of 60	3,968	
Persons living in poverty under age 60	6,400	

Source: Cambridge Systematics and TransSystems, Rural Transit Needs Assessment Study, Draft, page 3-15. Identified all Cochise County. Sierra Vista estimated based on reported percentage.

It is important to note that Sierra Vista's population includes Fort Huachuca as a result of the annexation of the Fort in 1971. The number of personnel at the Fort varies dramatically throughout the year. A primary military mission of the Fort is training in intelligence operations and communications at the U.S. Army Intelligence Center. However, there are on-going multiple activities.

The primary missions at Fort Huachuca include developing the Army's military intelligence structure with trained manpower and tested intelligence systems and equipment; providing seamless command, control, communications, computers and information technology services to the common user, war fighter and combatant commander across the Army; and testing electromagnetic compatibility, vulnerability of electronic equipment and interoperability of tactical and automated command, control, communications, computers and intelligence equipment and systems.

Training classes generally last from six to eight weeks with students cycling in and out the program with a base of permanent instructors and staff support.

As important for transportation planning, the Fort is home to over 37 different organizations including the U.S. Army Network Enterprise Technology command/9th Signal Command, the 11th Signal Brigade, the Raymond W. Bliss Army Health Center,

the Joint Interoperability Test Command, etc. al. None of the civilian workforce supporting these organizations lives on the Fort. There are 23 distinct neighborhoods with 1,300 housing units on the complex. Workers, along with a significant number of senior military personnel, must travel from civilian off-post housing to the Fort each work day.

The predominant employers in Sierra Vista are various governments. In addition to local government and education, there are the military and civilian employees at Fort Huachuca. It is estimated by the Cochise College Center for Economic Research that over 34% of all employment is associated with the government sector. Major employers are identified in Table III-3.

Table III-3
Major Employers in Sierra Vista

Rank	Sierra Vista Employers	Fulltime Equivalent Employees
1	Fort Huachuca	8,456
2	Sierra Vista Public Schools	1,109
3	Wal-Mart	900
4	Sierra Vista Regional Health Center	733
5	Northrop Grumman	600
6	General Dynamics	567
7	Aegis Communications Group	510
8	City of Sierra Vista	428
9	Lawley Automotive Group	223
10	Science Applications Int. (SAIC)	194

Source: Cochise College Center for Economic Research, Major Employer List, October 16, 2007

There are multiple educational opportunities available locally. Sierra Vista Unified School District consists of one high school, two middle schools, and six elementary schools. Fort Huachuca Accommodation schools operate one middle school and two elementary schools on the Fort. There are also five charter schools. Post-secondary educational opportunities include Cochise College and learning centers for University of Arizona South, University of Phoenix, Wayland Baptist University, and Western International University.

CHAPTER FOUR TRANSIT DEMAND ESTIMATE

Transit demand estimation for rural areas is a challenge. Major factors that need to be addressed include total population as well as the groups that traditionally rely on transportation as an alternative to the automobile. These demographic groups include elderly, low-income, zero-vehicle families and persons with mobility limitations.

A second significant factor is the ability to provide effective service. For transit services to meet the demand, they must operate frequently and provide workable connections between trip origin and destinations. Because of geographic and financial constraints, the ability to provide viable transit services varies with each area. In rural areas, towns are often spread out and cover large distances. There is also population dispersed outside of the political jurisdiction or city/town limits. In Sierra Vista, as with many community services, it is unrealistic to anticipate that all identified transit service needs will be provided.

In 2007, the Arizona Rural Transit Needs Study was completed by Cambridge Systematics, Inc. in association with TranSystems Corporation. In order to determine the transit demand, this study relied on the Arkansas Public Transportation Needs Assessment (APTNA) methodology. This assessment study, completed in 2000, surveyed rural transportation providers in four counties to identify ridership statistics. The populations of Arkansas transit dependent groups residing in the study area were developed from census data. Ridership history was then compared to population groups to develop annual rider rates. The comparison was reported as an annual trip rate for each group. For example, the reported number of passenger trips made annually by seniors (persons over 60 years of age) was divided by the total number of seniors in the area to develop annual rider rates, reported as one-way passenger trips per year. Based on this method, the following annual rider rates were determined:

Rider Group	Trip Rates: Annual One-Way Passenger Trips
Elderly persons ages 60 and over	6.79
Persons with disabilities under age 60	4.49
Persons living in poverty under age 60	20.5

Source: Arizona Rural Transit Needs Study, page 3-16, Cambridge Systematics, Inc.

While there are multiple methodologies available for estimating transit demand, it is appropriate to use the APTA method to be consistent with the information developed in the statewide Arizona Rural Transit Needs Study.

The transit demand estimate was calculated on a countywide basis. In order to determine the projected need for the study area, the percent of population for Sierra Vista was calculated to be 32.6%.

	Cochise County	Sierra Vista	%
Cochise County	137,200	44,736	32.6%

Source: Population Statistics Unit, Research Administration, Department of Economic Security, July 2007

Based on the factors developed in the APTNA, estimated transit demand for Sierra Vista, shown in Table IV-1, is just under 220,000. From October 2006 to September 2007, the federal grant year, total ridership on Vista Transit was 120,323. This would indicate that the current service is providing approximately 50% of the estimated demand.

Table IV-1
Annual One-Way Passenger Trips Estimate

	All Cochise County	Sierra Vista @ 32.6%
Elderly	217,129	70,798
Disabled	54,644	17,817
Poverty	402,392	131,206
	674,165	219,821

In addition to this quantitative analysis of demand, there are important qualitative factors that impact the need for transit services in Sierra Vista.

- Service to Fort Huachuca is difficult to estimate. The primary mission of the Fort is to provide training with classroom sessions generally limited to six weeks to six months and with a student population that is mainly younger adults. In addition to being a transient population, the military recommends that the students not bring private automobiles to the area. Therefore, this is a very transit dependent population. Providing transit from the base to shopping/restaurants/recreation is very important. Vista Transit management has consistently responded to this need by cooperating with Fort personnel to determine and provide effective service times and routes.
- Growth trends within the area clearly indicate a significant increase in the senior population. Based on forecasts of the Population Technical Advisory Committee (POPTAC), the number of passenger-trips needed by the senior population in Sierra Vista will increase from 70,798 to 133,000 by 2015.
- Sierra Vista has significant State Trust Land areas within the city limits. Approximately 560 acres of undeveloped State Land Trust holdings were identified. This issue, addressed in Vista 2020, Growth Element, (pp. 33-34) is the target of specific strategies to develop specific area plans, encourage retention of open space, promote cost efficient and effective public infrastructure, update Master Land Use plans, encourage multi-modal transportation systems, and coordinate with Cochise County on growth issues within a Joint Planning Area. The coordination and support of current and expanded Vista Transit services will be important to the success of this effort to manage growth.

- The two issues of older adults and development join in the challenge of serving new developments that are adjacent to Sierra Vista. Currently the service area is defined by the city limits. Several developments, specifically the Vista View Resort, are actively lobbying both Cochise County and the City of Sierra Vista for service.

In 2007 Vista Transit provided 120,323 passenger trips. This is 55% of the total estimated demand for service of 220,000 one way-passenger trips annually. As with many services provided to communities, the ability to meet all of the service demand is constrained by financial considerations. In the instance of rural transit services, the ability to provide frequent service with convenient connections between trip origins and destinations is also constrained by the geography and lack of centralized activity centers.

CHAPTER FIVE

TRANSIT SERVICE INVENTORY

Public transit services for the general public have been provided by Vista Transit to the Sierra Vista community since 1994. In keeping with the Vista Public Transit System Master Plan, the service area is restricted to the incorporated boundaries of the City of Sierra Vista. City limits include all of Fort Huachuca. The Vista Transit mission statement includes a commitment:

- To provide a high quality, efficient, coordinated, and affordable transit service to all residents of the City of Sierra Vista.
- To provide an affordable mode of transportation for senior citizens, developmentally disabled or physically impaired persons, and students, and to provide a means for all residents, both within our community and those who access our community through other transportation programs and
- To partake and be part of the Sierra Vista community we operate in.

The Vista Public Transit System Master Plan Update, issued in December 2004, identified four specific goals:

- Reconfigure loop routes into “Neighborhood Circulator Routes” to better serve the needs of the traveling public. Re-identify the existing route names by numbers and area served for more effective customer information.
- Expand the Vista Transit identity and restructure the service delivery.
- Develop a program that targets marketing efforts toward key constituencies.
- Develop cooperative marketing with local area businesses.

Significant progress has been made in achieving these goals. The restructure of the routes has been accomplished with four neighborhood circulator routes allowing riders to reach their destination in roughly half the time required before. Routes include the Westside Route 1, Eastside Route 2, Central Shopper Route 3, and the North/South Route 4. The Central Shopper Route 3 is an express shopper service providing faster services to attract riders to local businesses. A fifth route, the Mall-to-Mall route connects Sierra Vista Mall and commercial areas on State Highway 92 with the MI Village and Prosser Village Barracks on Fort Huachuca. The circulator routes have a common transfer point at the recently opened Vista Transit Center. Customers also enjoy faster service through a number of smaller transfer points along the routes.

Additional management and community outreach accomplishments include:

- Management review of job responsibilities of Transportation Services Superintendent and Transit Supervisor and development of a standard Monthly Report format for TAC/City Staff.
- Operational improvements are ongoing with continuing discussions with Fort Huachuca as needs change based on Army deployments and training activities.

Service/Route Description

Vista Transit operates deviated fixed route service with curbside pick-up available for customers over the age of 65, developmentally disabled, or the physically impaired. An application must be submitted to register for this service and reservations made 24 hours in advance. Neighborhood routes operate Monday to Friday with limited service on the weekends.

<i>Serving</i>	<i>Days</i>	<i>Hours</i>	<i>Frequency</i>
Westside – Route 1	M - F	7:00 am to 5:30 pm	30 minutes
Eastside – Route 2	M - F	7:00 am to 5:30 pm	30 minutes
Central Shopper – Route 3	M - F	7:00 am to 5:30 pm	30 minutes
North/South – Route 4	M - F	7:30 am to 2:30 pm	60 minutes
Mall to Mall – Route 5	Friday	6:00 pm to 9:00 pm	30 minutes
	Saturday	10:00 am to 9:00 pm	20 minutes
	Sunday	11:00 am to 3:30 pm	30 minutes

It is evident that the Transit Advisory Committee and staff of Vista Transit have been responsive and sensitive to the needs of the community in developing routes and schedules. Service to Fort Huachuca is clearly targeted to support the training schedules of the service personnel.

The current fare structure for each one-way trip is:

	Single Ride	Monthly Pass	Book of 20 tickets
Regular	\$1.00	\$32.00	\$20.00
Senior Citizen 65 year or older	\$.50	\$16.00	\$10.00
Disabled Citizen	\$.50	\$16.00	\$10.00
Students (College and under)	\$.50	\$16.00	\$10.00
Curbside to Curbside	\$1.50	N/A	\$30.00

Tickets are available at a variety of locations including the Transit Center, Public Works Administration Office, City Hall Main Lobby, Oscar Yrun Community Center, Ethel Berger Senior Center, and The Cove.

Ridership Profile

Ridership represents a broad range of needs in the community. As shown in Table V-1, the primary trip purpose is shopping, with adults the major rider group. The high number of recreational trips, 15%, is undoubtedly based on Fort Huachuca riders.

TABLE V-1
Vista Transit Riders and Trip Purpose

TRIP PURPOSE	% of Total		PASSENGER TYPE	% of Total
Medical	20%		Adults	50%
Shopping	40%		Child	5%
Employment	10%		Disabled under age 60	20%
Education	10%		Disabled over age 60	15%
Recreation	15%		Over age 60, not disabled	10%
Other (Specify)	5%			
% Total:	100%		% Total:	100%

After remaining fairly constant, ridership increased 10% in 2007 as shown in Table V-2. It should be noted that in the process of adjusting the route configuration, several changes were made throughout 2006 making it difficult to summarize ridership information. The decrease in 2006 ridership may reflect the data collection challenges.

TABLE V-2
Five Year Ridership

2003	113,883	
2004	107,613	-6%
2005	113,721	6%
2006	109,241	-4%
2007	120,323	16%

Route Productivity

Route modifications over the past two years have been made using two factors, actual ridership data from Vista Transit's extensive database and Census 2000 data characteristics for transit dependent individuals. Table V-3 identifies the significant increase in ridership per service hour that has been achieved with the implementation of the new route structure. An overview of anticipated productivity of different service types in rural areas is available in Appendix C.

TABLE V-3
October 2006 versus October 2007 Ridership

Service Factor	Oct. 06	Oct. 07	% Change
Deadhead Miles	114	103	-10%
Deviated Miles	148	111	-25%
Revenue Miles	20,416	22,881	12%
Total Miles	20,678	23,095	12%
Service Hours	1,284	1,204	-6%
Riders/Fare Collected	8,180	9,499	16%
Riders/Transfers	2,490	2,929	18%
Total Riders	10,670	12,428	16%
Riders per Service Hour	8	10	24%
Rider per Revenue Mile	0.52	0.54	4%

Improved routing has encouraged work trips by riders needing dependable transit service. The curb-to-curb service provides personalized service to all major retail, medical, governmental, and multi-family residential centers. The flexibility of serving elderly and disabled customers, coordinated with various transportation and human service providers enhances the overall quality of life for the citizens of Sierra Vista. In 2007, 15,333 curb-to-curb deviated trips were provided. This is 12% of the total 126,787 trips provided. In order to maintain the posted schedule times, a “TAG” (Transit Assistance Group) vehicle is available to provide this service.

Administrative Overview

The day-to-day operation of Vista Transit falls under the authority of the City’s Department of Public Works, Transportation Services Division. The Transit Supervisor reports directly to the Transportation Services Superintendent. There are currently 17.1 Full Time Equivalent (FTE) positions assigned to Vista Transit service.

Position	Quantity	FTE
Transportation Services Superintendent	1	0.5
Transportation Services Secretary	1	0.5
Transit Supervisor	1	1.0
Transit Administrator	1	0.01
Transit Accountant	1	0.04
Transit Finance Clerk	1	0.02
Transit Mechanic – Full Time Position	1	1.0
Dispatcher / Driver Full Time Position	8	8.0
Dispatcher / Driver Part Time Position	16	6.0

Traditionally, administrative functions such as scheduling/dispatching curb-to-curb trips and data collection have been assigned to a driver/dispatcher position. This has skewed the number of driver/dispatcher positions. Additionally, the number of part-time driver/dispatcher positions is significant. While this allows a degree of flexibility, it impacts the ability to develop predictable work shift schedules. Both of these issues will be addressed in the discussion of alternatives.

The Vista Transit Advisory Committee (TAC) is active and meets quarterly. The TAC represents a variety of community sectors including the Disability Commission, senior association, Department of Economic Security, Developmentally Disabled programs, as well as Fort Huachuca support services. Community feedback and comments are actively solicited and encouraged.

Facilities/Equipment Inventory

The vehicle fleet includes eleven vehicles. The assessment of the condition of the vehicles was made by Vista Transit staff. Table V-4 summarizes age, mileage, and condition of the vehicles in operation as of February 2008.

TABLE V-4
Vista Transit Fleet

Fleet #	Year	Make	Seat Capacity	Mileage (02/08)	Condition
349	2007	Intl.	22	24,496	Adequate
350	2007	Intl.	22	18,669	Adequate
354	2007	Intl.	22	8,798	Adequate
355	2007	Intl.	22	5,595	Adequate
351	2007	Intl.	22	2,185	Adequate
341	2003	Bluebird	30	75,248	Good
330	2002	Ford	19	230,179	Adequate
332	2002	El Dorado	25	150,000	Adequate
311	1999	Ford	20	275,825	Adequate
289	1999	Ford	20	202,931	Adequate
315	1998	Ford	21	257,778	Poor

Vehicle #s 311, 289, and 315 are used for back-up and are scheduled to be replaced.

Excellent progress has been made in developing quality facilities to support Vista Transit riders. The Vista Transit Center is a 2,450 square foot facility that includes restrooms and a passenger lounge area. Dispatch and supervisor offices are available as well as a driver's break room. The bus staging area allows for easy cross-platform transfers between the various routes. Seating is available for waiting riders both inside and outside. Funding for the \$1.6M building was provided by Federal Transit Administration grant programs administered by the Arizona Department of Transportation, Public Transportation Division with local match funding from Sierra Vista general funds.

The building was built to be eligible for certification by the Leadership in Environmental and Energy Design (LEED) program. The LEED program defines sustainable development to minimize impacts on the earth's natural resources while enhancing comfort for the building's users. The Vista Transit Center will be the first fully LEED certified City facility.

Vehicles are stored and maintained at the Pedro Castro Maintenance Center. This facility provides all vehicle maintenance and has an ample storage area.

Signature, or major bus stops, are proposed at the Mall, State Route intersections of Highways 90 and 92 and the Military Intelligence facility at Fort Huachuca. Initial design concepts include sweeping canopy shelters with ample seating.

Financial Information/Analysis

Total administrative, operating and capital budget requests preliminarily approved by ADOT in May 2008 for Section 5311 funding for 2009 (October 2008 to September 2009) are shown in Table V-5. Revenue Sources are shown in Table V-6.

Administrative expenses account for 22% of the operating/administrative cost (excluding capital) to operate Vista Transit. Included are half of the Transportation Service Superintendent, Transportation Service Secretary, and all of the Transit Supervisor's salaries as well as other expenses such as marketing, printing and building utilities. Of the total administrative expense of \$228,891 local funding match of 20% or \$45,779 is required with grant funding requested from the Section 5311 program of \$183,122.

Operating expenses account for 78% of the administrative/operating cost to operate Vista Transit. As expected, the major operating expense is driver's salaries/fringe benefits, accounting for 68% of total operating costs. Fuel and maintenance are also significant expenses, accounting for 23% of total operating costs. Of the \$831,150 total operating expenses, farebox revenue is deducted to calculate the amount eligible for grant funding, from the Section 5311 program. Total grant funding available is 58% or \$426,967 with a required local match of 42% or \$309,183.

Overall, the FTA Section 5311 grant program provides 57% of the funding to support Vista Transit. The major sources of local match funding are the statewide Local Transportation Assistance Fund (LTAF -Arizona Lottery Funds) and the City of Sierra Vista General Fund.

TABLE V-5
Vista Transit Proposed FY 09 Budget

Administration			% of Subtotal	% of Total
Trans. Superintendent. (50%)	39,634			
Transit Supervisor (100%)	51,761			
Trans. Secretary (50%)	15,169			
Administrative Services	9,176			
Fringe Benefits	36,951			
Subtotal Personnel	\$ 152,691		67%	
Travel	2,000		1%	
Audit	2,000		1%	
Utilities	15,000		7%	
Marketing/Advertising	24,000		10%	
Printing	20,000		9%	
Office Supplies	12,000		5%	
Substance Abuse Program	1,200		1%	
<i>Subtotal Administration</i>		\$ 228,891		22%
Operations				
Drivers Salaries	432,569			
Fringe Benefits	135,781			
Subtotal Personnel	568,350		68%	
Fuel and Oil	100,000		12%	
Tires/Parts/Maint.	92,000		11%	
Vehicle Insurance	40,000		5%	
Uniforms	4,000		0%	
Cleaning Supplies	5,000		1%	
Vehicle Lease	4,000		0%	
Communication	5,100		1%	
Drivers Testing/Physicals	1,000		0%	
Bus Shelter Maintenance	3,700		0%	
Safety supplies	5,000		1%	
Specialties Supplies	5,000		1%	
<i>Subtotal Operating</i>		\$ 833,150		78%
Total Admin/Operating		\$ 1,062,041		
Capital				
Supervisor Van	30,000			
Bus Stop Benches (5)	4,000			
Mobile Radios (2)	4,000			
Security Camera System (5)	25,000			
Tire Balancer	13,500			
		\$ 76,500		
TOTAL BUDGET		\$ 1,138,541		

Additional capital funding from grant years prior to 2009 and not shown on this budget is available to complete the Transit Center Parking Lot and provide for a replacement vehicle.

TABLE V-6
Vista Transit Proposed 2009 Sources of Revenue

			% of Subtotal	% of Total
Operations/Administration				
Farebox	97,000		21%	
General Fund	134,962		30%	
State LTAF	220,000		49%	
Subtotal Local		\$ 451,962		43%
Federal Grant Funding				
5311 Operations @ 58%	426,967			
5311 Admin. @ 80%	183,112			
Subtotal Grant		\$ 610,079		57%
		\$ 1,062,041		
Capital:				
Local Fund	15,300		20%	
5311 Capital	61,200		80%	
		\$ 76,500		
Total Budget		\$ 1,138,541		

Allocated Costs

Determining how costs are allocated among service hours, miles, and vehicles will help determine the effectiveness of the current program and provide insight into the cost of making changes in service over the next five years.

Cost information from the proposed City of Sierra Vista FY 09 Budget has been used to develop a two-factor cost allocation model of current services. Costs are allocated to two service variables, vehicle-miles and vehicle-hours. In addition, a group of fixed costs are assumed to be constant for the short term (a year or two.) For example, fuel costs are assigned to vehicle-miles and driver salaries to vehicle-hours. The total allocated costs are then divided by the projected total revenue miles or hours to determine a cost rate for each operating factor. The allocated costs for Vista Transit shown in Table V-7 are:

$$\text{Total Cost} = \$226,762 + \$39.95 \times \text{Vehicle Hours} + \$0.93 \times \text{Vehicle Miles}$$

Incremental costs, such as an extension of service hours, potential reduction in service routes, or use of the vehicles for special trips could be evaluated considering only the mileage and hourly costs:

$$\text{Incremental Cost} = \$39.95 \times \text{Vehicle Hours} + \$0.93 \times \text{Vehicle Miles}$$

TABLE V-7
Vista Transit FY 09 Projected Allocated Costs

Administration	Total	Vehicle Hours	Vehicle Miles	Fixed Costs
Trans. Superintendent. (50%)	39,634			39,634
Transit Supervisor (100%)	51,761	25,800		25,961
Trans. Secretary (50%)	15,169			15,169
Administrative Services	9,176			9,176
Fringe Benefits	36,951	8,129		28,822
Travel	2,000			2,000
Audit	2,000			2,000
Utilities	15,000			15,000
Marketing/Advertising	24,000			24,000
Printing	20,000			20,000
Office Supplies	12,000			12,000
Substance Abuse Program	1,200			1,200
<i>Subtotal Administration</i>				
Operations				
Drivers Salaries	432,569	432,569		
Fringe Benefits	135,781	135,781		
Fuel and Oil	100,000		100,000	
Tires/Parts/Maint.	92,000		92,000	
Vehicle Insurance	40,000		40,000	
Uniforms	4,000			4,000
Cleaning Supplies	5,000			5,000
Vehicle Lease	4,000			4,000
Communication	5,100			5,100
Drivers Testing/Physicals	1,000	1,000		
Bus Shelter Maintenance	3,700			3,700
Safety supplies	5,000			5,000
Specialties Supplies	5,000			5,000
<i>Subtotal Operating</i>				
Total Admin/Operating		603,279	232,000	226,762
Annual Service Factors		15,101	250,070	
		Service Hours/Year	Service Miles/Year	
Cost Allocation	\$	39.95	\$	0.93
		\$/Hour	\$/Mile	Fixed Cost

Performance Measures

Several yardsticks used by transit agencies can be applied to measure the operating performance of transit services. While these benchmarks are useful, it can be misleading to compare one transit system or one type of transit service with another. However, these measurements provide a means to monitoring the on-going performance of Vista Transit and identify and manage changes.

Based on the proposed FY 09 budget, the average total operating/administrative cost per vehicle mile is \$4.25. Cost per one-way trip is \$8.83. Cost per vehicle hour is \$70.33. Table V-8 summarizes these performance measures.

TABLE V-8
Vista Transit FY 09 Performance Measurements

1	Operating and Administrative cost	\$ 1,062,041
2	Costs allocated to hours	\$ 603,279
3	Cost allocated to miles	\$ 232,000
4	Fixed costs	\$ 226,762
5	Fare Revenue	\$ 97,000
6	Ridership	120,323
7	Vehicle Hours	15,101
8	Vehicle Miles	250,070

	Cost Allocation Data	
Table V-7	Allocated Cost per Vehicle Hour	\$ 39.95
Table V-7	Allocated cost per Vehicle Mile	\$ 0.93
	Operating Effectiveness Measures	
(6/7)	Passenger Trips per Hour	8.0
(6/8)	Passenger Trip per Mile	0.5
	Financial Efficiency Measures	
(1/6)	Cost per Passenger Trip	\$ 8.83
(1/7)	Cost Per Vehicle Hour	\$ 70.33
(1/8)	Cost per Vehicle Mile	\$ 4.25
(5/6)	Revenue per Passenger Trip	\$ 0.81
	Subsidy per Passenger	\$ 8.02
(5/1)	Farebox Ratio	9%

CHAPTER SIX

COORDINATION STRATEGY

Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plans were mandated in SAFETEA-LU legislation and supported by the President's *United We Ride* Executive Order to Coordinate Transportation Programs for seniors, Disabled and Low Income. In Arizona, Governor Napolitano issued Executive Order 2005-16 in July 2005 to formalize the *Arizona Rides* initiatives.

Beginning in 2007, in order to receive funding under FTA's Section 5310, Section 5316 and Section 5317 programs, locally derived *Transportation Coordination Plans* must be developed. The FTA also expects Section 5311 and 5307 projects to participate in these plans. Vista Transit's participation in this coordination process is included in the Southeastern Arizona (SEAGO) Regional Transportation Coordination Plan completed in March, 2007.

During this process needs assessments for the SEAGO area were developed. The unmet needs common across the region include:

- County meetings: Need to distribute LTAF II as effectively as possible.
- Need comprehensive list of providers/service areas/client requirements, etc. Ideas for communicating include website, printed brochures, possible Chamber of Commerce coordination, and toll-free telephone.
- Diverse population needs need to be addressed.
- Mention of AzTA website for basic information.
- Need to get from town to town – i.e. Benson/Tombstone to Sierra Vista

The Cochise County Sub region includes three rural public transit services – Douglas Rides in Douglas, Bisbee Bus in Bisbee and Vista Transit in Sierra Vista. Currently, the Cochise Commuter provides regional service connecting Douglas, Bisbee and Sierra Vista. A map of the service area is shown in Figure VI-1. Vista Transit coordinates closely with this service, providing transfers at the Transit Center.

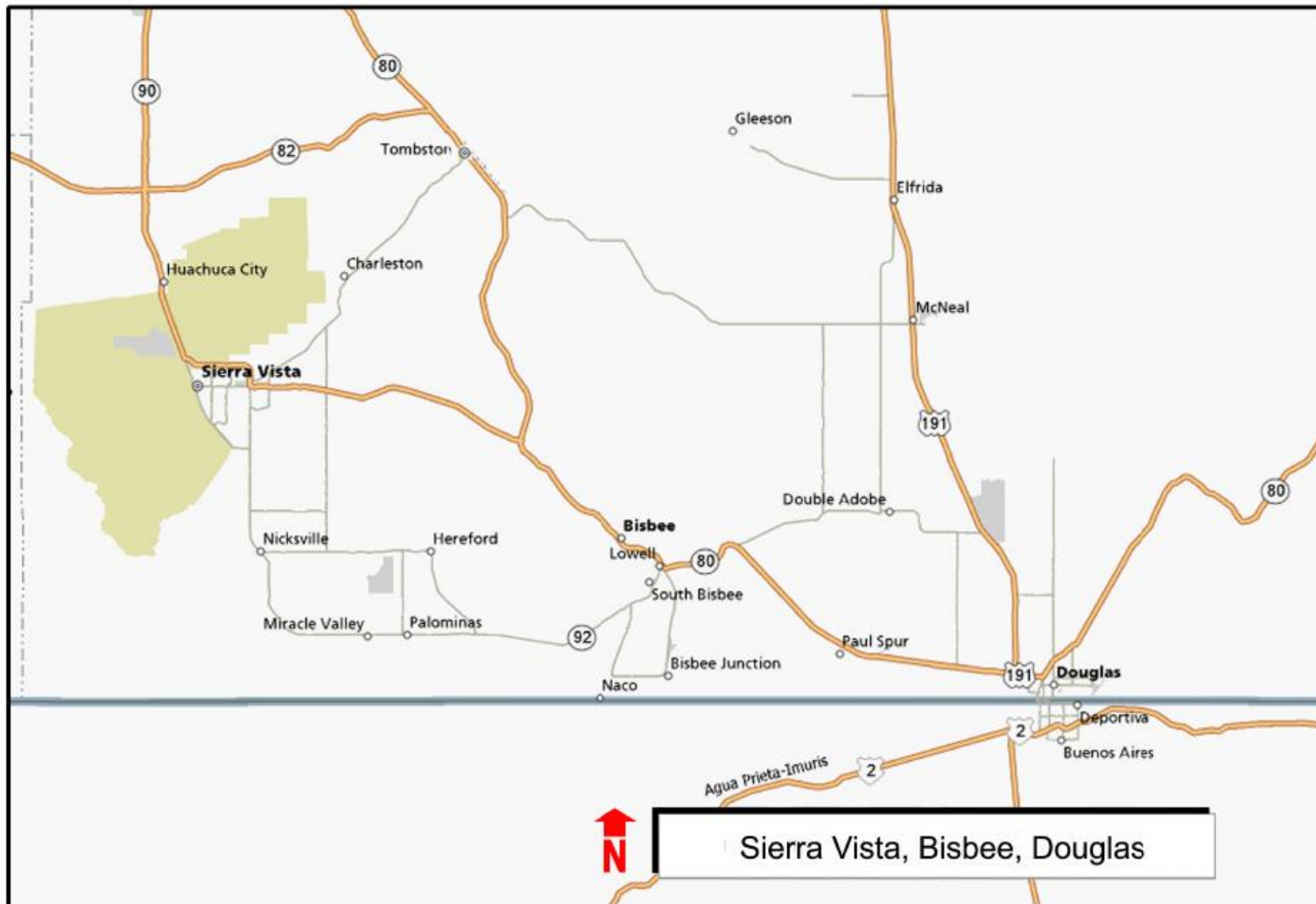
Coordination strategies specific to Vista Transit and the Cochise Sub region include:

- All agencies are interested in working together to improve communication and become more knowledgeable of the services they provide.
- Vista Transit will purchase a computer applications program to provide coordination of deviated service requests and fixed route transit services.
- City of Sierra Vista is able to provide maintenance service IF vehicle belongs to government agencies and are on lien to ADOT.

Funding requests over a three-year time frame for Vista Transit are consistent with the 2009 grant application and include:

- Increase in operating budget to reflect increased costs,
- Purchase three replacement vehicles; purchase one additional vehicle; purchase Dispatch Software,
- Complete Phase III of Transit Center,
- Construct three signature bus stops; additional capital for shelter/benches

FIGURE VI-1
Douglas/Bisbee/Sierra Vista Cochise County Sub region



The original coordination plan, issued in March 2007, was updated in the SEAGO's Transportation Coordination Plan Update in April 2008. Several changes over the past year are significant.

- AIRES (Arizona Integrated Residential and Education Services) has provided transportation seven days a week in Sierra Vista to individuals with developmental disabilities. Late in 2007, AIRES became a for-profit agency and vehicles obtained with federal funding will be redistributed to other non-profits in the area. The impact on Vista Transit should be minimal, but may increase demand.
- Cochise County applied for and was awarded a Section 5317 – New Freedoms grant to provide transit services through a voucher system to areas outside the incorporated limits of the City of Sierra Vista. The County would work with an existing transit provider for these services. The provider could be Vista Transit or another non-profit such as Cochise Commuter, Colors of Success, or SEABHS, etc. Due to County staff changes, the status of this grant is unclear. This may be an opportunity for Vista Transit to provide services to adjacent areas, such as Vista View Resort.

In 2008, Sierra Vista restated the priority coordination needs:

- Providing transit service through IGA outside of the city limits where many senior communities are located. Extension of service will need to be supported by Cochise County.
- No mechanism/administration to coordinate with Section 5310 (Elderly and Persons with Disabilities) providers to increase service efficiency.
- Providing coordination for riders arriving on other transit systems for transfers to Vista Transit. The Vista Transit Center is open to transit service providers as a bus stop/transfer location.

CHAPTER SEVEN SERVICE ANALYSIS/ALTERNATIVES

The Five Year Master Plan addresses five key areas. Management structure and administrative alternatives are discussed. The effectiveness of the current services area is analyzed and options for expanded service are discussed. Marketing of service to encourage maximum ridership is addressed. The coordination of service, both locally and regionally, is reviewed. A capital plan to address equipment and facility needs is incorporated with a funding plan to support the preferred operating plan.

Management/Administration

Vista Transit is operated by the City of Sierra Vista and coordination with other city services is central to the administration of the transit services. In addition to the anticipated human resources/finance/payroll support, fleet maintenance is provided by the Maintenance Division. Engineering Services completed the route map with in-house graphics programs. Grant management is also available from a grants administrator.

Two personnel issues need to be addressed. The first is the current use of part-time drivers and the second is the differentiation of administrative support services from the driver job description category.

Currently there are 9 FTE and 16 part-time/6 FTE driver/dispatcher positions. While the ratio can change based on open positions, the split remains relatively constant. In terms of wages, there is an economic advantage to employing part-time drivers.

	Full-Time Driver	Part-Time Driver	Target Annual Increase
Average \$/Hr Wage	\$13.72	\$12.46	6%
Average \$/Hr Benefits	\$5.90	\$.96	3%
Total	\$19.62	\$13.42	

Part-time drivers tend to have a higher turnover, and therefore a lower overall wage. The major components of differences in benefits are retirement (9.6%) and health/dental benefits (3.1%). The target for providing pay increases is also higher for full-time employees as an incentive to support superior job performance and stability of the work force.

However, most transit agencies find equally compelling arguments for full-time employees. In addition to the base cost for a new hire, hiring expenses are even more for driving positions that require a Commercial Drivers License (CDL), drug/alcohol testing and DOT Physicals. The cost for training a new employee is also significant, both in terms of out-of-pocket costs for employee wages and training tuition for the employee and the time commitment required by supervisory staff.

The annual cost to transfer One FTE part-time driver to a full time driver would be:

One Full-Time	\$40,800	
Two Part-Time	\$27,900	
Incremental Cost	\$12,900	+ 46%

While the full-time driver group is very stable, Vista Transit has a difficult time recruiting and retaining part-time drivers. Some of the challenges with retaining part-time drivers, in addition to the entry level pay range and limited benefits, include an unrealistic understanding of the scope of the job. Applicants often do not realize the pressure of both driving safely and dealing with customer service issues. The bright side is a bus full of happy customers and the dark side is dealing with unruly riders and a variety of difficult situations. New hires are often lured away to higher paying jobs offering complete benefits. Many part-time drivers have a second part-time job that they have assigned a priority. There are a limited number of semi-retired local drivers who want part-time work based on specific schedules making shift assignment difficult.

Hiring any new employee is an expensive process, both in terms of budget and time. Driving positions are especially complicated due the requirement to have a CDL. In an employment market with a relatively large available labor pool, the significant cost differential may discourage adding new full-time employees; were the job market to tighten, it may become necessary to transition to more full-time positions to retain a full roster of drivers.

Following discussion at the June TAC meeting, it was agreed that a transition of four part-time to two additional full-time drivers as positions were open was reasonable. This would better balance the driver pool with 10 FTE and 2 FTE (4-6 part-time) drivers.

A second employment issue is the current situation where there is one “generic” job description for “driver/dispatcher” without recognizing the advanced skill sets needed to support transit operations. Currently, driver and dispatcher jobs are combined into one job description. Recognizing that the two functions require different job skill sets, the option to develop separate job descriptions for the dispatch position needs to be explored.

Typical responsibilities and specialized skills that are required to oversee and dispatch day to day operations and maintain management and administrative information.

Dispatch functions:

- Maintains written records of transit requests on computer.
- Coordinates transit route/customer deviation pickups.
- Answers routine questions pertaining to the Transit System and City Services.
- Monitors and responds to a variety of calls including two-way radios and mobile phones; verify and monitor staff unit locations; record all service calls; prepare, prioritize and relay transportation requests.
- Review, organize and maintain trip manifests to maximize route efficiency.

- Collect transit fares and distribute transit tickets; account for reconciliation of funds received; conduct appropriate cash controls; process new client applications.
- Maintain written computer generated log of all service requests; update client information, driver hours, mileage and passenger information for reporting purposes; respond to all calls and service requests promptly and with courtesy.
- Respond to emergency situations as requested; coordinate with police and emergency dispatchers as required.

Administrative functions:

- Prepare and maintain a variety of files and filing systems; prepare, maintain and update various records.
- Collect, record, and prepare reports regarding transportation services including ridership by route; verify driver logs; distribute information to appropriate staff members.
- Prepare a variety of correspondence, reports and documents as assigned; complete various forms.
- Coordinate with Fleet Services and drivers regarding vehicle maintenance and driver training.

These responsibilities and related skills need to be recognized in a transit dispatcher job classification and have been forwarded to the city human resources office to finalize the job description and finalize the grade level.

Another possible administrative adjustment would be to integrate other city transit services currently being provided for other programs. Currently the Parks & Leisure Department has 2 buses dedicated to supporting senior activities and up to 6 vans for youth activities. Coordination of the services provided by these vehicles may be helpful.

For example, departure/destination may be scheduled out of the Transit Center allowing some participants to use the regular transit services to connect to special event buses. Maintenance may also be coordinated with other transit vehicles. Another advantage could be the option to use larger vehicles for special events. Advantages of the current services include the ease of scheduling on-site and the ability to use program staff as drivers.

An initial activity to further this coordination would be to provide the Parks and Leisure Department with ample quantities of printed information about the current routes/times to encourage recreation participants to use Vista Transit to access programs.

Operations/Services

As with any service, operating improvements and adjustments need to be addressed periodically.

Operating improvements that have been identified include:

- The need to develop operational policies for providing Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) - Equivalent Paratransit services. The ADA provides two levels of paratransit services – Complementary Paratransit for Fixed Route Services and Equivalent Paratransit for Deviated Fixed Route/Demand Response services. The procedure for providing special services, specifically curbside pick-up for customers “over the age of 65, developmentally disabled or the physically impaired” is clearly stated on the Vista Transit brochure. Procedures for scheduling this service are clearly stated and understood by the riders.

However, there have been some inconsistencies in the service provided by drivers. To clarify the expectations of Vista Transit drivers, a clear operating policy needs to be developed, discussed with drivers, and then applied consistently. A draft of a policy addressing the provision of curb-to-curb service has been provided in Appendix D and is being reviewed for implementation.

- Passenger fare adjustments.

The current fare structure for each one-way trip is:

	Single Ride	Monthly Pass	Book of 20 tickets
Regular	\$1.00	\$32.00	\$20.00
Senior Citizen 65 year or older	\$.50	\$16.00	\$10.00
Disabled Citizen	\$.50	\$16.00	\$10.00
Students (College and under)	\$.50	\$16.00	\$10.00
Curbside to Curbside	\$1.50	N/A	\$30.00

This fare structure has apparently been in place since 2001 and generates a farebox recovery rate of approximately 9%; farebox revenues pay for approximately 9% of the cost to provide the service. While urban transit services target a farebox recovery of 20%, rural areas more generally have farebox recovery rates of 10 to 12%.

Other similar size cities were contacted to determine current fare levels for a one-way passenger trip.

	<u>Route</u>	<u>Curb-to-Curb</u>
Cottonwood	\$1.00	\$1.50
Bullhead City	\$1.00	\$2.00
Lake Havasu	\$1.00	\$2.00
Douglas	\$1.00	\$1.00
Bisbee	\$1.00	\$1.50

The fare for a one-way ride on a regular route is in line with other transit services. However, a 25¢ increase could be considered for a regular trip. An increase of 50¢ would be consistent with other agencies special service fares. This increase would generate approximately \$33,000 in additional revenue, raising the farebox recovery to 12%. A National Transit Institute report, Building and Retaining Ridership, estimates that for every 1% in farebox increase, ridership decreases 1/3%.

Vista Transit Five Year Master Plan

	Riders	Current	New	Increase	Additional Revenue	
Total Riders	120,000					
Route	104,667	\$ 1.00	\$ 1.25	\$ 0.25	\$ 26,167	
Special Needs	15,333	\$ 1.50	\$ 2.00	\$ 0.50	\$ 7,667	
By Route Bus	4,189					
By Tag Bus	11,144					
Total Operations Cost \$ 1,062,041					Current Revenue \$ 97,000	Farebox Ratio 9%
					New Revenue \$ 130,833	12%

One of the challenges with increasing the regular fare to \$1.25 is the aggravation for riders to have exact change and the impact on drivers monitoring fare collection.

The increase to the special needs, or curb-to-curb service could be an important tool to manage the need to provide “TAG bus” service. Regular route buses are only able to provide approximately one-third of the trips requested. Currently the buses on regular routes need to be assisted when a number of requests for special service are made within a short timeframe. The Dispatcher (see discussion of driver/dispatch job responsibilities) takes reservations and schedules a reserve vehicle – called a TAG bus” to provide these special trips. Currently there can be two or three TAG buses scheduled a significant cost factor. The increase to \$2.00 for this service is consistent with other agencies and could help to control the use of this service.

Setting farebox levels is more appropriately a policy rather than a financial decision and was discussed by the TAC for local impacts and there was general agreement that a fare increase is appropriate. Initially, the recommended target adjustment would be limited to increasing the Curbside-to-Curbside fare from \$1.50 to \$2.00. In order to assist riders that must use this service frequently, a 75% discount on the 20 ticket book would be offered. No discount is included on other 20 Ticket Book purchases; they are purchased for convenience only. A Monthly Pass must be purchased to receive a discount for all other rider categories. A Monthly Pass for curbside service would not be useful as the staff is unaware of any riders using this service on a daily basis.

Rider Category	Single Ride	Monthly Pass	% Discount	Book of 20 tickets	% Discount
Regular	\$1.00	\$32.00	75%	\$20.00	0%
Senior Citizen (over 65)	\$.50	\$16.00	75%	\$10.00	0%
Disabled Citizen	\$.50	\$16.00	75%	\$10.00	0%
Students (College and under)	\$.50	\$16.00	75%	\$10.00	0%
Curbside to Curbside	\$2.00	N/A		\$30.00	75%

Prior to initiating this or any increase, there will need to be community outreach and information including:

- On-board information with proposed fare increase with a request for comments/suggestions.
- A press release advising non-riders of the proposed increase requesting community comments.
- Present to City Council for review/comments

The target date for this fare increase for Curbside-to-Curbside has been tentatively set for January 2009. Vista Transit will need to continue to address fare increases and it will be helpful if this is done on a more consistent basis. Based on current economic circumstances and drastically increasing fuel costs, the TAC may decide to implement the increase in regular fares to \$1.25 at the same time. If not, this increase should be addressed to be effective January 2010.

- Several enhanced technology alternatives should also be considered to improve the management of Vista Transit. Efforts are currently underway, along with several other rural transit agencies to purchase and integrate scheduling software into transit operations. This would not only consolidate data management, but would be a tool to dispatch the special needs trips more efficiently.

Other transit agencies have successfully used security cameras on vehicles. Not only is this helpful in monitoring riders, but can be an invaluable tool in accident investigation. Approximate cost is \$2,000 for the first vehicle, with lower costs for subsequent installations.

A service vehicle is needed for the Transit Supervisor to use in providing road supervision as well as coordinating operations between the Transit Center and Maintenance Center. The Supervisor needs to be able to monitor both locations and needs a fuel efficient and readily available vehicle for this purpose.

Service improvements that have been identified for attention include:

- Service to several residential areas within the city limits of Sierra Vista that are not currently being served, specifically the area in the southern part of Sierra Vista. The most likely candidate for new service in the next two years would be the residential area south of Avenida Cochise to Kachina Trail and east of Coronado Drive to the activity centers adjacent to Highway 92. This area is bisected by Buffalo Soldier Trail. Housing developments that may be candidates for expanded service include Pueblo del Sol, the Ridges – Mountain, Shadow, and Eagle, and Canyon de Flores.

In developing a new transit service, the choice of service types could range from fixed route to dial-a-ride/demand response service. There are fundamental challenges that fixed-route transit cannot address adequately, including developing effective routes in residential areas and the cost to provide the ADA required Complementary Paratransit service. On the other end of the spectrum, demand responsive service, while more responsive to market needs, is a less efficient and expensive alternative.

A relatively recent development to provide a more market driven service without the capacity constraints and expense of demand response service is Call and Ride service. Call and Ride is a curb-to-curb transportation service within a specific geographic area, is available to all residents and commuters in the area, and is usually designed to connect with other transit services. Call and Ride service is often considered a precursor to developing a fixed route schedule.

Call and Ride service provides a shared ride in a small vehicle that, in this instance, would operate to the north and south of Buffalo Soldier Trail as well as medical offices east of Highway 92. When a customer calls the Call and Ride number, they are connected directly to the driver of the vehicle to schedule the trip. The uniqueness of this service is that the customer has direct contact with the bus driver. If a slot is full, the operator can tell the passenger when the next slot will be open. The route would connect to other Vista Transit service at the Sierra Vista Mall.

Cost to provide this service would be:

Monday to Friday	7 am to 5:30 pm	
10.5 hours x 5 days x 50 weeks = 2,625 hours	@ \$39.95/hr.	= \$104,868
Estimate 15 miles/hour x 2,625 = 39,375 miles	@ \$.98/mi.	= <u>\$ 38,587</u>
		\$143,455

While the service could begin with existing fleet, an expansion vehicle would be needed. Based on the anticipated 20% local match, the one-time cost would be \$32,000.

This analysis provides information about operating alternatives and estimate of cost to extend service to new areas and expansion of service is not recommended at this time. Prior to any decision about adding service to a new area, community interest would need to be established with a targeted survey to determine interest and projected ridership.

- Service improvements to the West End retail stores and services were discussed at the TAC meeting. Specifically, the current Route 5 – Mall to Mall service connects Fort Huachuca with the Sierra Vista Mall by traveling the Highway 90 By-Pass from the Fort and via Buffalo Soldier Trail for the return trip. The option to route this service along Fry Boulevard was suggested to allow access to West End businesses.

Staff was asked to review this option. If the route could be modified without impacting service frequency and maintain safe stops, it would be a reasonable option to provide service to this area. Any route change could be accommodated effective January 2009 to coincide with the fare increase.

This discussion opened the opportunity to provide stops on Fry Blvd. for other routes. Any stops on this major arterial would need to be reviewed with Public Works, Planning and Police staffs to determine the impact on traffic flows and related safety issues. If it was agreed that stops on Fry Blvd. were acceptable, design and construction of pull outs would be necessary.

- Service to several residential areas outside the city limits of Sierra Vista that are not currently being served have been requested over the past year. Vista View Resort, located east of Sierra Vista outside of the current service area, has approached both Cochise County and Sierra Vista requesting service. Curb-to-curb service is provided to the adjacent mobile home park which is in the city limits.

A grant application for \$85,000 from the New Freedom's Section 5317 program to fund this service has been awarded to Cochise County to provide service to unincorporated county locations including Vista View Resort. The local match requirement is \$42,000. While the Cochise Board of Supervisors has committed to part of the local match, the remainder has not been secured as of May 2008. Catholic Community Services Southeast Arizona (CCS-SEAZ) is pursuing alternatives to providing this service. Other local programs that could also provide this service are Vista Transit or another local service programs with vehicles provided by FTA Section 5310-Elderly/Disabled funding.

SEAGO as well as Cochise County are actively involved in resolving this situation. It will be important that Vista Transit consider this the first of any number of requests to expand service beyond the current service area which is defined by the city limits.

- Service to the "community within the community" at Fort Huachuca was discussed. In 2004, the Yellow Route provided 10 hours of service Monday to Friday on the base between the hours of 6:30 am and 4:30 pm. The route took an hour to complete a loop on the Fort and connecting to other routes at the North Garden Transfer Point. This route has marginal productivity, 6 riders per hour versus the target ridership 10 riders per hour. Possible modifications to the route included:
 - Eliminate stops south of Smith Avenue including the leg to the MP Station on Boyd Avenue. This portion of the route travels through a residential area and an area of officer housing with very sparse ridership. Would decrease the loop to 30 or 45 minutes.
 - Operate with a mid-day break with service from 6:30 am to 9:30 am and 2:30 pm to 5:30 pm, accommodating workers connecting from the Sierra Vista routes to jobs at the Fort and allow for their return. It would also provide an opportunity to travel from one office to another during the majority of the work hours.(See Vista Public Transit System Master Plan Update, December 2004)

The decision to move to weekend only service beginning in January 2005 met with the approval of then Garrison Commander as ridership was low and neighborhood residents were complaining about the noise of the buses. Vista Transit staff continues to meet regularly with Fort staff in order to tailor service to changing needs. Currently, the Fort has issued a Request for Proposal to provide Intra-Post shuttle service that would involve metered taxi style service.

In summary, it is inevitable that additional requests will be received from both the current service area and from regional locations as the Sierra Vista area continues to expand. Of primary importance will be that the review of requests for expansion of service be addressed in a consistent and open process.

One approach would be to develop a protocol for a review process. The information that a citizen/group requesting new service would need to complete would be standardized and would allow comparison of subsequent requests. An example is provided in Figure VII-1. Note that the reality of additional funding to support expanded service is incorporated in initial discussions. If service was requested outside the city limits, the group requesting service would be responsible for contacting Cochise County to determine their level of participation. This approach could be accomplished with support from current Vista Transit staff.

As an alternative, staff could be expected to respond to requests made for expanded service. A group requesting service could initiate the process by contacting the City Manager or Council Member and the staff would be charged with determining the relevant operating data and ridership projections.

Current Vista Transit staffing levels most likely will not be able to support this kind of analysis. Two alternatives may be considered. Support could be provided by the city Planning Department staff. This work group would be more familiar with demographic characteristics and other community growth issues. Another alternative would be to request technical assistance from ADOT via the Rural Transportation Assistance Program. Funding from this source may or may not be available and may not be available in the timeframe needed.

Perhaps a combination of these two approaches would be most feasible with the requesting community group providing an overview of service expectation – days of the week, hours, possible routes, etc. that they would anticipate needing with staff translating this to the operating parameters such as annual service hours/miles.

Most important, it is strongly recommended that the TAC agree on a standard protocol for handling these requests to provide an equitable and manageable process.

A series of joint City/County public meetings to address the issues of expanding the service area may be useful. This process would be an extension of the work already underway with the SEAGO Regional Transportation Coordination Plan. The original effort was completed in March 2007 with an update issued April 2008.

FIGURE VII-1

VISTA TRANSIT NEW SERVICE REQUEST (DRAFT)	
<p>Describe Service Request: _____</p> <p>_____</p>	
<p>Service Area: _____</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Within Sierra Vista City Limits Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>(If outside Sierra Vista City Limits and in unincorporated Cochise County, you need to contact County officials to determine level of participation by County. Contact Cochise County Planning/Transportation, 520-462-9240 or local County Supervisor)</p>	
<p>Service Hours/Day _____</p> <p>Days of Week _____</p>	
<p>Optional:</p> <p>Estimated Miles/Day: _____</p> <p>Estimated Miles per Week: _____</p> <p>Service Hours per Week:: _____</p> <p>Service Hours per Year: _____</p> <p>Estimated Miles per Year: _____</p>	
<p>Activity Centers/Transit Rider Locations: _____</p> <p>Estimated Ridership: _____</p> <p>(Note: Provide basis of estimate)</p>	
<p>Estimated Operating Cost _____</p> <p>(Hours per Year @ \$39.95 + Miles/Year @ .98¢)</p> <p>(Note: Cost should be updated annually)</p>	
<p>Proposed Source of Funding:</p> <p>_____</p>	
<p>Person/Organization Submitting Request:</p> <p>Name _____</p> <p>Address _____</p> <p>Phone _____</p> <p>Email _____</p>	

- There has been some discussion of providing commuter service to Tucson. Four services were identified as providing service to Tucson (primarily to Tucson Airport), an eighty mile one-way trip.
 - Sierra Transport: Routes include Douglas, Naco, Bisbee, Benson, Nogales, Phoenix, Tucson and Tucson airport
 - Three Canyons Transit Company: Daily Tucson airport shuttle service with morning departures and pickups in Hereford, Sierra Vista, Huachuca City, Whetstone and Benson. Fares, from the internet site are:

# OF PASSENGERS	ONE WAY	*ROUND TRIP (Each Way)
Single rider	\$88.00*	\$70 (each way) pre-payment required*
2 - 3 Passengers	\$60.00 per person*	\$50 (each way) pre-payment required*
4 - 5 Passengers	\$44.00 per person*	<i>ask about our special family rates!</i>
6 - 14 Passengers	\$33.00 per person*	<i>inquire about our group discounts!</i>

Other regional shuttle services located in Sierra Vista include Transportation Express and Independent Shuttle Service.

If Vista Transit were to provide this service, significant new dispatch/administrative effort would be required. A new vehicle would also be required. One round-trip in the morning and afternoon could be provided. Cost to provide this service, based on fully allocated costs would be:

Monday to Friday 7 am to 11 am and 2 pm to 6 pm
 8 hours x 5 days x 50 weeks = 2,000 hours @ \$71.74/hr. = \$142,940

There are appropriate restrictions on general public transit agencies receiving federal funding providing services in competition with private sector providers. Unless there were a significant number of workers unable to find employment in Sierra Vista or Tucson or a need for specialized medical services available only in Tucson, it would not be appropriate for Vista Transit to provide this service. At this time, it is not recommended that Vista Transit consider providing service to Tucson or any other neighboring towns.

Marketing

- Vista Transit, originally a service available only to program clients, has done an excellent job of establishing an identity as a service open to all. An aggressive marketing program has established that the service is open to everyone and can be used for wide-ranging activities. This includes not only medical and required appointments, but shopping and recreation.

A marketing plan completed in 2004 identified the objectives to strengthen brand identify, improve user-friendliness of service, enhance awareness and image, support service enhancements, and build usage. With the development of the new route system many of these recommendations have been implemented. For example, route identification was expanded from color only to include mention of the general area of town the “loop” serves: Westside, Eastside, Northside, Central Shopper, and Mall.

Over the next five years, Vista Transit will need to continue to identify and implement similar marketing alternatives. Grant funding assistance has been made available to update the 2004 marketing plan and provide a revised printed schedule/route map. It is anticipated that this effort will begin by fall of 2008 and could incorporate rate and/or route changes for a January 2009 start-up.

As the Internet has become more user friendly, many people are using this communication tool as a source of information. Currently, transit information is available at two locations on the Internet. Route and schedule information is located at www.ci.sierra-vista.az.us as part of the City of Sierra Vista website. Also provided is a quick, easy to read overview of the system. When the next map/brochure is printed, the link to this website should be included. Information is also linked to the Arizona Department of Transportation comprehensive website at www.dot.state.az.us. Information about Arizona transit systems, and specifically Vista Transit located at www.dot.state.az.us/about/transit.

Coordination

- Over the past several years, the three regional general public transit services, Vista Transit, Bisbee Bus, and Douglas Rides along with the Cochise Commuter have discussed the possibility of developing an informational video describing the transit services available and how to use them. This project, in addition to the other coordination efforts mentioned in Chapter Six, would be very useful to further coordinate services as well as expand marketing efforts.

Funding

- In planning for funding over the next five years, Vista Transit needs to be aware of the probability that the program will transition from the FTA 5311–General Public Grant Program to the FTA 5307–Small Urbanized Area Grant Program after the 2010 Census.

Currently Vista Transit receives a major funding grant from the FTA Section 5311 program for providing transit in rural areas. For urbanized areas, referred to as UZAs, the FTA Section 5307 Program allocates funds based on legislative formulas. For areas of 50,000 to 199,999 in population, the Section 5307 funding is based on population and population density. For areas with populations of 200,000 and more, the Section 5303 program formula is based on a combination of bus revenue vehicle miles, bus passenger miles, fixed guideway revenue vehicle miles, and fixed guideway route miles as well as total population and population density.

At the 50,000 population level, Sierra Vista would be considered an urbanized area, or UZA, and would form a Metropolitan Planning Organization, an MPO. Funding would not be administered by ADOT-Public Transportation Division, but would be received directly from FTA Region IX.

In addition to the planning requirements associated with the MPO, a Section 5307 transit agency becomes responsible for maintaining data consistent with the National Transit Database and is subject to triennial reviews. This comprehensive compliance audit includes a desk audit of information supplied by the agency in 23 areas of operations and administrative management subject to regulations of public transit agency receiving federal funds. A site visit is then made to complete the review. The FTA encourages the agency to correct compliance issues with sanctions as a last resort.

There is no definitive database to judge if an agency is “better or worse” off moving from the Section 5311 (Rural General Public) to Section 5307 (Small Urban) funding resource. Often times, there is more funding from the Section 5307 program, but has significant limitations to using funds to support administrative and operating costs other than those associated directly with vehicle procurement and maintenance. Section 5307 funding is often considered more reliable as it is distributed based on population, as opposed to the competitive application process for Section 5311 funding.

Vista Transit management will need to be aware of this potential for change in funding and the expansion of service area. The transition to the new funding program will most likely be implemented at least two years after Census 2010 is completed. It is important to keep in mind that the transition to urbanized status, if it were to occur, will impact a number of other public services, not just transit.

- In previous years, a state lottery-based funding program Local Transportation Assistance Fund (LTAF II) has been a significant source of funding for the local match for grants awarded to transit agencies. While LTAF II funding for FY 2008 has not been revised, The Arizona Transit Association Weekly Legislative Report on April 18, 2008, reported that, given the enormity of the fiscal issues in FY 2009, it is comparatively less likely that that LTAF II will remain unaffected. For Vista Transit, the 2009 budget indicated that LTAF II funding will provide \$220,000 of the total \$362,186 required local match to grant funding.

As of June 2008, an alternative proposal is under consideration for stabilizing this source of funding. LTAF II would be appropriated at \$9.5M in FY 09. In future fiscal years, funding would grow by an estimated 10% per year until it hits the existing cap of \$18M in FY 16. The only time funding has reached the \$18M cap was in FY 06. The past three year average for funding has been \$10.9M annually.

There is also a proposed ballot initiative being pursued by the Governor and TIME Coalition to provide significant funding for public transportation at a higher rate of predictability than the current LTAF II structure. This ballot initiative would reduce the political pressure of protecting the existing LTAF II program in lieu of potential funding increases associated with this statewide initiative.

Given the current economic situation, it is anticipated that fiscal issues will be significant both at the City and State level over the coming years. If it becomes necessary to consider budget reductions, the use of allocated costs factors will be helpful in evaluating options for service reductions if needed.

CHAPTER EIGHT

FIVE YEAR PLAN

Financial Plan

The financial plan for the five year time period covered includes:

- Vehicle Replacement/Expansion Plan
- Other Capital Facility Improvements
- Fiscally Constrained Operating and Capital Budgets
- Anticipated Revenue Sources

The Vehicle Replacement Plan for Vista Transit reflects the discussion of potential service expansion by the TAC. At this point, there were no specific expansion services identified and funding is limited to current service operations. Therefore, the fleet plan has been developed to maintain the current fleet size of eight vehicles with three available for back-up.

A Supervisor's van has been requested for 2009; however it is unclear if local matching funds will be available. A replacement vehicle is requested in 2010 and two vehicles each year after that. If expansion services are approved, additional capital investment will be required.

TABLE VIII-1
Vista Transit Fleet Replacement Plan

Unit #	Year	Make/Size	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
315	1998	Ford		Replace			
289	1999	Ford			Replace		
311	1999	Ford			Replace		
332	2002	El Dorado				Replace	
330	2002	Ford				Replace	
341	2003	Bluebird					Replace
351	2007	Intl.					Replace
355	2007	Intl.					
354	2007	Intl.					
350	2007	Intl.					
349	2007	Intl.					
Van	2009	New	\$ 30,000				
	2010	Replace (1)		\$ 162,000			
	2011	Replace (2)			\$ 330,000		
	2012	Replace (2)				\$ 340,000	
	2013	Replace (2)					\$ 425,000
			\$ 30,000	\$ 162,000	\$ 330,000	\$ 340,000	\$ 425,000

Possible Conversion of Transit Fleet to Alternative Fuels

As discussed in Chapter VII, page 37, when Sierra Vista reaches the 50,000 population level it will transition to the FTA Section 5307 grant funding program. In addition, other regulatory programs will take effect. For example, the federal Clean Air Act requires that the air quality of urbanized areas be monitored for pollution such as ozone, particulate matters and carbon monoxide. If an area exceeds the requirements, it is designated a nonattainment area with remedial actions required.

In response to this requirement, SAFETEA-LU amended section 5308 of title 49 United States Code, commonly referred to as the Clean Fuels Grant Program, and offers a formula-based to a discretionary grant program to support transit agencies.

The FTA Section 5308 program has a two-fold purpose. First, the program was developed to assist nonattainment and maintenance areas in achieving or maintaining the National Ambient Air Quality Standards for ozone and carbon monoxide (CO). Second, the program supports emerging clean fuel and advanced propulsion technologies for transit buses and markets for those technologies. In 2009, \$22M was available nationwide for this program. Vista Transit may be eligible to receive funding under the second area.

The City of Sierra Vista along with Vista Transit should be aware of the potential of converting the transit fleet to some alternative fuel. Transit buses not only help reduce the number of cars on the road, but with fixed routes and centralized fueling; they make an ideal niche market for alternative fuels. Using alternative fuels in bus applications can greatly reduce emissions and provide local energy diversity.

Transit vehicles are the target of many new technologies including alternative fuels, hybrid technologies, and fuel cells. Commonly considered alternative fuel resources include:

- Compressed Natural Gas
- Liquefied Natural Gas
- Liquefied Petroleum Gas (propane)
- Biodiesel
- Battery-electric power (Including hybrid technologies)
- Hydrogen

Advantages to alternative fuels generally include improved air quality through reduced emissions, meeting state standards for nitrogen oxide and particulate matter emissions, and public perception by reducing black smoke and noise.

Disadvantages include initial cost: alternative fuel vehicles can cost 20%-40% more than diesel buses to purchase. For example, a 35-passenger, heavy-duty transit vehicle will cost about \$350,000. Cost for the same body/capacity operating with hybrid technology is \$505,000. But offsetting savings may be achieved in fuel and service costs and in some cases grants, credits, and rebates. Fuel delivery is one the significant challenges facing alternative fuel fleet operations. Modification to fleet maintenance facilities and mechanic training are also significant obstacles.

At this point, the selection of a preferred technology would be premature. However, it would be prudent to begin monitoring the technologies. Two excellent sources of information about alternative fuel vehicles are:

DOE AFV Fleet Buyer's Guide, www.fleet.doe.gov

DOE's Alternative Fuels Data Center, www.afdc.doe.gov

A hands-on resource to monitor developments in alternative fuels is the annual Community Transportation Association of America (CTAA) annual conference that includes a major expo of current vehicle technology and other resources available to smaller transit agencies. It is recommended that Vista Transit staff attend the annual meeting when possible. ADOT-FTA funding is available to cover the expenses of this training opportunity.

Other Capital Facilities that should be secured over the next five years include:

- Bus Stop Shelters/Benches are estimated at \$900 each. If stops are added to Fry Blvd., this may need to be increased.
- Transfer Centers, often termed signature stops, are included for locations such as the Mall and the corner of Fry Blvd. and Highway 92.
- Surveillance cameras are requested for on-board rider safety.
- Mobile radios will be needed for the replacement vehicles.
- Maintenance equipment includes a tire balance and miscellaneous pneumatic tools.
- Scheduling/dispatch software to support dispatch for deviation requests has been included. This purchase is being coordinated with several other rural transit agencies to minimize cost.
- Office equipment includes a new computer.

Table VIII-2 provides the estimated capital cost for vehicle/facility improvements.

TABLE VIII-2
Vista Transit Facility Plan

	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Shelters/Benches	\$ 4,000	\$ 15,200	\$ 11,600	\$ 3,600	\$ 3,600
Transfer Centers		\$ 300,000		\$ 300,000	
Surveillance Cameras	\$ 25,000	\$ 5,500	\$ 5,800	\$ 11,600	
Radio Equipment	\$ 4,000		\$ 2,000		
Maintenance Equip.	\$ 13,500	\$ 5,000			\$ 5,000
Dispatch Software		\$ 28,000	\$ 2,800	\$ 3,100	\$ 3,100
Office Equip.			\$ 3,000		
	\$ 46,500	\$ 353,700	\$ 25,200	\$ 318,300	\$ 11,700

Operating and Capital Budgets have been based on the approved budget for 2009 submitted to ADOT for funding under the Section 5311 program. This combined five year budget is shown in Table VIII-3.

- Administrative costs have been escalated at 3% annually.
- Operating costs for driver/dispatch staff, communication, and employee training and supplies have been escalated at 3% annually. Costs for fuel/parts/maintenance and licenses/insurance have been escalated at 5% per year.
- Capital funding is based on anticipated costs for vehicle and equipment replacement.
- Sources of revenue assume that 2009 funding partners would continue participation at current levels with a 3% increase annually.
- LTAF II funding provided \$220,000 of the total required local match of \$467,261 for federal grant funding. If these funds were to not be available, it would have a significant impact on Vista Transit service. Recent updates concerning legislative strategies for balancing the FY 2009 state budget consistently target suspension of the LTAF II program. Alternative sources of funding may be a university stimulus plan and/or the TIME Initiative. If service needs to be reduced due to funding loss, allocated cost factors will be useful in identifying areas to reduce costs.
- Grant revenue assumes that the Section 5311 grant program will continue to be funded at current levels. SAFETEA-LU, the reauthorization of these grant funds, was effective 2004 and covered a six year period. Indicators are that grant programs will not be cut in future years. Grant participation was calculated based on:
 - Operating costs less farebox revenue are funded at a 58% Federal/42% Local Match ratio.
 - Administrative costs are funded at an 80% Federal/20% Local Match ratio.
 - Capital costs are funded at an 80% Federal/20% Local Match ratio. There is a Sliding Scale/STP Flex Match ratio that is funded at a 93% Federal/7% Local Match ratio. However, the availability of these funds varies annually and planning reflects the higher match rate.

TABLE VIII-3
Vista Transit Five Year Operating and Capital Budgets
Sources of Revenue

Administrative Cost	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Aministrative Staff/Fringe	152,691	157,272	161,990	166,850	171,855
Travel/Training	3,200	3,296	3,395	3,497	3,602
Audit	2,000	2,060	2,122	2,185	2,251
Utilities	15,000	15,450	15,914	16,391	16,883
Marketing/Adv./Printing	44,000	45,320	46,680	48,080	49,522
Office Supplies	12,000	12,360	12,731	13,113	13,506
	<u>228,891</u>	<u>235,758</u>	<u>242,830</u>	<u>250,115</u>	<u>257,619</u>
<i>Subtotal Administration</i>					
Operating Cost					
Driver-Dispatch Staff/Fringe	568,350	585,401	602,963	621,051	639,683
Fuel and Oil	100,000	105,000	110,250	115,763	121,551
Tires/Parts/Maint.	92,000	96,600	101,430	106,502	111,827
Vehicle Insurance	40,000	41,200	42,436	43,709	45,020
Cleaning Supplies	5,000	5,150	5,305	5,464	5,628
Vehicle Lease	4,000	4,120	4,244	4,371	4,502
Communication	5,100	5,253	5,411	5,573	5,740
Drivers Testing/Uniforms	5,000	5,150	5,305	5,464	5,628
Bus Shelter Maintenance	3,700	3,811	3,925	4,043	4,164
Operating Supplies	10,000	10,300	10,609	10,927	11,255
	<u>833,150</u>	<u>861,985</u>	<u>891,876</u>	<u>922,866</u>	<u>954,997</u>
<i>Subtotal Operating</i>					
Total Admin/Operating	<u>1,062,041</u>	<u>1,097,742</u>	<u>1,134,706</u>	<u>1,172,981</u>	<u>1,212,616</u>
Capital					
Vehicles	30,000	162,000	330,000	340,000	425,000
Other Facility Improvements	4,000	315,200	11,600	303,600	3,600
Software/Shop/Office Equip.	42,500	38,500	13,600	14,700	8,100
	<u>76,500</u>	<u>515,700</u>	<u>355,200</u>	<u>658,300</u>	<u>436,700</u>
Total Operating and Capital	<u>1,138,541</u>	<u>1,613,442</u>	<u>1,489,906</u>	<u>1,831,281</u>	<u>1,649,316</u>
Sources of Revenue					
Local Match					
Farebox	97,000	99,910	102,907	105,995	109,174
LTAF II	220,000	226,600	233,398	240,400	247,612
	<u>317,000</u>	<u>326,510</u>	<u>336,305</u>	<u>346,394</u>	<u>356,786</u>
Subtotal Other Local					
Sierra Vista General Fund	150,261	243,763	217,575	284,369	246,497
	<u>467,261</u>	<u>570,273</u>	<u>553,880</u>	<u>630,764</u>	<u>603,284</u>
Subtotal Local					
Federal Grant Funding					
5311 Operations @ 58%	426,967	442,003	457,602	473,785	490,577
5311 Admin. @ 80%	183,113	188,606	194,264	200,092	206,095
5311 Capital @ 20%	61,200	412,560	284,160	526,640	349,360
	<u>671,280</u>	<u>1,043,169</u>	<u>936,026</u>	<u>1,200,518</u>	<u>1,046,032</u>
Subtotal Grant					
Total Budget	<u>1,138,541</u>	<u>1,613,442</u>	<u>1,489,906</u>	<u>1,831,281</u>	<u>1,649,316</u>

Implementation Plan

A timetable to implement the Vista Transit Five Year Transit Plan has been prepared. This Implementation Plan provides a detailed listing of activities to accomplish the service alternatives that were identified and discussed by staff and the local Transit Advisory Committee. Activity areas that are discussed include:

- Management
- Operations/Service
- Marketing
- Coordination
- Capital Plan
- Funding

Target activities will be used to determine specific accountability accomplishments of the transit agency as part of the grant review process. It will be important for the agency to update and revise the implementation plan elements as local circumstances change. The goal is to provide a balance between expectations for improved/expanded service with the need to adapt service to changing local needs.

Many of the tasks could be considered on-going, for example a transit agency should always be looking for additional funding partners. However, tasks have been assigned to reflect a continuity of effort.

The Implementation Plan for Vista Transit is summarized in Table VIII-4.

Vista Transit Five Year Master Plan

TABLE VIII-4
Vista Transit Five Year Implementation Plan

Plan Year: October 1 to September 30		
Year	Area:	
2008-2009	Management	Finalize job description for Dispatcher. Determine protocol for reviewing requests for expanded service. Develop ADA Policies for drivers to ensure consistent service.
	Operations/Service	Review weekend service to West End activity/commercial services. Transition to two additional full-time drivers. Following additional TAC discussion, and approval, increase fare for Curbside-to-Curbside service to \$2.00
	Marketing	Work with consultant to update printed schedule/marketing program. Conduct rider outreach to support fare increase for specialized service.
	Coordination	Work with SEAGO to provide updated service information. Provide support for New Freedoms grant service to Vista View as appropriate. Consider workshop with city/county and other SEAGO transit providers.
	Capital Plan	Purchase Supervisor Van. Funding for surveillance cameras and shop equipment.
	Funding	Monitor status of LTAF II funding. Develop fiscally constrained budget
2009-2010	Management	Review potential for coordinating service for Parks and Leisure.
	Operations/Service	Review farebox for possible increase to \$1.25. Continue contact with Fort Huachuca to determine appropriate level of service.
	Marketing	Implement marketing program prepared by marketing consultant.
	Coordination	Work with SEAGO to encourage coordination.
	Capital Plan	Replace one vehicle. Signature stop development. Purchase dispatch software. (or 2008)
	Funding	Support legislative activity to provide stable funding resource.
2010-2011	Management	Continue to monitor special service requests. Monitor status of Census 2010.
	Operations/Service	Monitor full-time to part-time driver ratio. Survey riders for customer satisfaction. Revise routes as appropriate.
	Marketing	New printed schedule if appropriate.
	Coordination	Continue to support coordination with other agencies/grant programs.
	Capital Plan	Replace two vehicles. Add shelters, surveillance cameras, and new computer.
	Funding	Work to develop additional funding partners.
2011-2012	Management	Update Driver Policy and Procedure Manual and Vehicle Maintenance Plan. Based on results of Census 2010, prepare for transition to Section 5307 funding program.
	Operations/Service	Review service levels and analyze route productivity. Revise routes/service hours as appropriate.
	Marketing	Update marketing plan.
	Coordination	Continue coordination with other transit agencies.
	Capital Plan	Replace two vehicles. Signature stop development, update dispatch software.
	Funding	Monitor status of LTAF II or other funding programs.
2012-2013	Management	Potential transfer to FTA Section 5307 grant funding.
	Operations/Service	Review service levels and determine funding requirements for maintaining services.
	Marketing	Reprint information brochure.
	Coordination	Consider possibility of expanding service area based on definition of UZA.
	Capital Plan	Replace two vehicles. Add shop equipment and surveillance cameras.
	Funding	Possible switch to new funding program.

APPENDIX B

VISTA TRANSIT Five Year Plan Workshop
December 11, 2007
4:30 to 6:30
Sierra Vista City Hall

Attending:

Wilma Krzmarzick	Vista View Resort
Charles Krzmarzick	Vista View Resort
Brenda Foote	Sierra Vista Public Works
Carol Dockter	Sierra Vista City Council
Sam Chavez	ADOT – Public Transportation Division
Nacho Blanco	Vista Transit
Mary Tanguay	Commission of Disability Issues
Laura Ory	Sierra Vista Herald
Richard Garr	SEAGO
Sharon Mitchell	SEAGO
Mike Hemesath	Sierra Vista Public Works
Roger DeVries	Citizen
Steve Tyminski	Sierra Vista Public Works/Vista Transit
Rick Mueller	Sierra Vista
Amy Ostrander	Ostrander Consulting, Inc.

Following introductions, the goal of completing Five Year Plans for all Arizona rural general public transit service agencies, funded by the FTA Section 5311 program was reviewed. In order to obtain feedback from the community, a Vista Transit Survey has been completed by 62 persons and is attached. Summary comments include:

65% of are currently using the service; 35% are not riders

77% rate service as Excellent or Good, 23% rate service as Average to Poor

Ridership by route show:

Central	28%
North/South Loop	21%
East Side Loop	15%
West Side Loop	13%
Curbside Pick-Up	10%
Fort Huachuca	7%
Special Events	3%

Over the past several years, Vista Transit has completed several significant improvements including revision of route structure to shorten ride time and completion of the Transit Center. This facility supports all routes and allows for real-time transfers throughout the system. The most recent change was the implementation of improved weekend service to Fort Huachuca. This service recently provided over 700 rides on one Saturday. New facilities funded and scheduled for development in 2008 include improved “signature” bus stops/shelters at the Mall, Fry’s @ Highway 90/92, and Fort Huachuca.

Discussion of issues that need to be addressed in the Five Year Plan included:

Local Issues:

- New Service Areas:
 - Vista View Resort, located east of Sierra Vista, has requested service. The Resort is outside of the current service area, the City Limits of Sierra Vista. However, curb-to-curb service is provided to the adjacent mobile home park which is in the city limits. A grant application from the New Freedom’s Section 5317 program to fund this service has been submitted by SEAGO, with a commitment by the Cochise Board of Supervisors to provide the local match. A decision how to best provide this service, Vista Transit or another local service provider (operating with Section 5310-Elderly/Disabled funding) will need to be addressed.
 - Alternatives for service to the area south of the Mall including Pueblo del Sol, will need to be addressed as this area grows. The population includes a number of 55 plus housing developments.
- Information/Alternatives to Address Expanded Service Areas:
 - The discussion about Vista View Resort identified the need to address the overall issue of serving enclaves and/or adjacent unincorporated county residents.
 - The plan needs to identify the facts of providing service, including potential riders in these areas and cost to provide service.
 - The plan also needs to identify alternatives to provide this service and potential funding resources.
- Alternatives to Address Regional Coordination/Funding
 - In order to support the coordination of services and address requests for expanded service, information about alternatives to form regional alliances need to be identified.
 - Regional options will be a longer term decision, but information but should begin to develop information.
- Administrative/Management Development of Vista Transit
 - As Vista Transit service has expanded, it is necessary to review job descriptions, specifically to recognize need for advanced computer skills.
 - Addition of technology to make dispatch more efficient.

A draft report will be completed by the end of January for review by the TAC and other community stakeholders.

APPENDIX C

Rural Transit Service Productivity Estimates

<u>Service Type</u>	<u>Average Productivity by Service Type</u>
Dial-a-Ride:	
Countywide Dial-a-Ride	1-2 trips per hour
Rural Town Dial-a-Ride	1-3 trips per hour
Dial-a-Ride Zone	4-8 trips per hour
Fixed Schedule - Rural	6-12 trips per hour
Schedule by service area is established based on resources/rider needs.	
Must be clearly posted and well marketed.	
Examples:	Nutrition Site Meals
	Alternate service days to cover remote, distant locations
Flexible Routes	8-12 trips per hour
Vehicle will deviate upon request from route.	
Entry level or precursor service for fixed route.	
Service Routes	Vehicle Capacity
Grouped trips for specific service program.	
Specific clients to specific locations, often subscription riders.	
Examples:	Shopper Shuttle from Senior Housing
	Adult Daycare/Sheltered Workshops
	Head Start
Fixed Routes	Vehicle Capacity
Fixed routes, timed schedule	
Baseline for urban feeder routes: 22 trips per hour	

Productivity Estimates from KFH Group, Inc., October 2002

APPENDIX D

Vista Transit Special Need Service Policy

DRAFT

Vista Transit is providing deviated fixed route service, and consistent with the Americans with Disabilities Act, provides equivalent paratransit service for eligible riders that are over the age of 65, developmentally disabled or the physically impaired.

The policy for Vista Transit is to provide curb-to-curb service. Drivers are not expected to provide service that extends to “door-to-door” service, (e.g. go beyond the doorway into a building) to assist a passenger. Drivers are not to leave their vehicles unattended or lose the ability to keep their vehicles under visual observation. Drivers are not to drive to areas that are clearly unsafe (e.g. take a vehicle down a narrow alley, go under a low-hanging building canopy).

(Additional information about securing wheelchairs, attendants and other service for special needs riders may be included in this policy)